

[Mr. LEACH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereinafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. KINGSTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereinafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

CYPRUS—22 YEARS OF DIVISION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] is recognized for half the time until the hour of midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, here we are again, year after year, doing this special order marking the 22 years of division of the Republic of Cyprus as the result of an unlawful invasion 22 years go by the Turkish military.

I am saddened by this so-called anniversary but, of course, we are all hopeful that this will be the year that the division of Cyprus is finally resolved. And I guess year after year after year we are always hopeful that this will be the year. And, of course, it never turns out to be that way. And then here we are again, the esteemed gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the esteemed gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], the esteemed gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK], so many others, doing this. We will continue to do it because we feel that possibly we may penetrate the consciousness of the people responsible.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks regarding the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS]?

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today's Special Order on Cyprus comes on the 22d anniversary of the brutal invasion by Turkish troops. I commend my friend the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] for organizing this Special Order. Today, the international community is still confronted with the fact that in excess of 30,000 Turkish military personnel remain on the island of Cyprus to enforce an illegal partition and to protect a self-proclaimed government that has been recognized by only one other country—Turkey itself.

Those of us in the Congress who have supported a negotiated settlement to the dispute which has led to the division of Cyprus are painfully aware of the complexities of the issue, the injustices committed, and particularly the suffering over these many long years of

the Cypriot people on both sides of the Green line.

Indeed, Cyprus has become a code-word for stale-mate and intractability in international diplomacy.

This year, new governments in Greece and Turkey had led to hopes and expectations that a fresh start in improving relations between the two countries could be made, and lead to the mutual confidence that could produce a settlement for Cyprus.

Those hopes were dashed when Turkish war ships attempted to challenge Greek sovereignty over Imia. Because of concerns over increasing instability in the Aegean we placed a hold on the transfer of three U.S. naval frigates to Turkey.

I hope that our hold will send a strong signal to Ankara that the patience of the Congress has just about run out, and that we want to see movement on getting Turkish troops out of Cyprus, among other things.

I am distressed that the Clinton administration seems more interested in coddling Turkey's military than in finding a solution for Cyprus.

Last year, we were hopeful that the Administration under the guidance of former Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke would take on the Cyprus question, just as Holbrooke had taken on the job of finding peace in Bosnia. Regrettably Mr. Holbrooke has left the Administration, but it is hoped that one of our other talented diplomats could produce a breakthrough in the region.

The shape of a possible settlement is out there. I believe that both President Clerides and Mr. Denktash are men who can rise above the recent enmity that has developed between the two communities, and find a way to reunite the island based on mutual good-will and confidence.

Regrettably, following the elections this past December, the Turkish government appears to be in a weakened position and thus less able to reign-in recalcitrant elements among Turkey's political and military establishment. Recent developments in Turkey have led to an Islamist government coming to power in Ankara. The willingness of that government to engage in dialog and compromise on the Cyprus question is not yet clear. But the fortunes of the people of Cyprus must not be held hostage to internal Turkish political problems.

Old history and grievances must be placed behind us as we seek to resolve the division of Cyprus. I hope and pray that both sides of the problem will reach within themselves to find the resolve to settle this persistent problem. The Greek Cypriots have demonstrated flexibility and the spirit of compromise in recent rounds of U.N. sponsored talks. The international community and the U.N. should recognize this as we re-evaluate our tactics in the light of the most recent failure to move beyond the current situation.

Twenty-two years is a long time. There are now young people coming of

age in Cyprus who know nothing other than the experience of living in a divided society. For this next generation what can guide them in learning to accept life with a neighboring but different culture? Time is running out for the possibility of achieving a peaceful settlement, and the people of Cyprus now have to ask themselves if the enmity between the two communities is truly worth the price of a divided nation.

□ 2230

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, nobody deserves more credit than the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] on the issue of human rights all over the world, and I really thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, Cyprus is roughly the same size as the State of Connecticut with approximately 660,000 inhabitants. Turkish and Greek Cypriots lived together on the island side by side for almost five centuries. However, the landscape, Cyprus, was dramatically changed when Turkey invaded the island in 1974. On July 20 of that year Turkish forces, some 6,000 troops and 40 tanks, landed on the north coast of Cyprus and captured almost 40 percent of the island, and the international community has strongly condemned the military invasion from the beginning. On the very day of the invasion the United Nations adopted Resolution 353, which called upon all states to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Cyprus and demanded an immediate end to military intervention in the Republic of Cyprus. However, Turkey ignored the edict of the international community and launched a second offensive in August, 1974.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER] at this time.

Mr. PORTER. I very much thank the gentleman from Florida for arranging this special order on Cyprus and commend him for his great leadership in attempting to once again bring us together to address this very, very serious matter.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today, as I have many times before, to commemorate the sad anniversary of the tragic separation of Cyprus by Turkish troops. This past Saturday, July 20, marks the 22d year of the separation.

On July 20 1974, over 6,000 Turkish troops and 40 tanks landed on the north coast of Cyprus and heavy fighting took place between them and the Cypriot National Guard. Turkish troops pressed on to the capital city of Nicosia, where they engaged in heavy street fighting with Cypriot National Guardsmen and Cypriot irregulars. Throughout the battles, the Turkish air force bombed and strafed Greek-Cypriot positions and attacked the Nicosia airport. By the time a cease fire had been arranged on August 16, Turkish forces had taken the northern third of the country.